

HOSMER (W<sup>TH</sup>)

# A P P E A L

TO

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

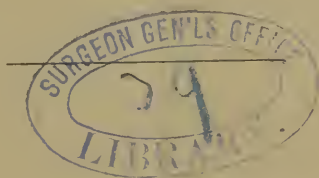
IN FAVOR OF

FEMALE PHYSICIANS.

BY

REV. WILLIAM HOSMER,

EDITOR OF THE NORTHERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE; AUTHOR OF THE  
YOUNG MEN'S BOOK; THE YOUNG LADY'S BOOK, ETC.



NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY GEORGE GREGORY, 129 NASSAU STREET.

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PHILADELPHIA: T. B. PETERSON,

102 CHESTNUT STREET, GIRARD BUILDING.

1853.

# N. E. FEMALE MEDICAL COLLEGE,

LOCATED IN BOSTON.

The Sixth Annual Term will commence on Wednesday, November 2, 1853, and continue four months, at which period of the year its term is established, viz., four months, from the first Wednesday in November, annually.

The Institution has a full Board of Professors, and gives a complete Medical Education, including the usual branches, Anatomy, Surgery, Physiology and Hygiene, Medical Jurisprudence, Principles and Practice of Medicine, Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children, Materia Medica and General Therapeutics, and Chemistry.

FEES. — To each of the seven Professors, \$10; to the Demonstrator of Anatomy, \$5. Graduation fee, \$20. Medium price of board in the city, \$3 per week.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION. — The candidates for Medical Diplomas must be at least twenty-one years of age; must have pursued the study of medicine three years, — two of which must have been under the supervision of a respectable Practitioner of Medicine, — and must have attended two full Courses of Lectures, one of which must have been at this Institution. The pupils can receive private instruction from the Professors during the portion of the year not included in the Term.

The N. E. Female Medical College is conducted and sustained by the Female Medical Education Society, incorporated by the Massachusetts Legislature. Gentlemen or ladies become annual members of the Society by the payment of \$1, and life members by the payment of \$20. It is optional with the annual members to continue one year or more.

The Society's Report, and further information respecting the association or its institution, can be had by applying, personally or by letter, to the Secretary, Samuel Gregory, 15 Cornhill, Boston.

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## FEMALE MEDICAL COLLEGE OF PENNSYLVANIA,

LOCATED IN PHILADELPHIA.

The next Annual Term will commence October 1, 1853.

The course of instruction, the fees, and the requirements for graduation are similar to those of the N. E. Female Medical College.

Particulars may be learned of Dr. David J. Johnson, Dean of the Faculty, 229 Arch Street, Philadelphia.

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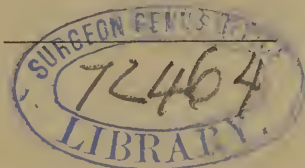
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## PUBLISHER'S ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following pages are taken from the "Young Lady's Book," by permission of the author and of the publishers, Messrs. Derby & Miller, Auburn, N. Y., a valuable and interesting work of three hundred pages, treating upon the different branches of female education, this among others. The publisher, having for a number of years been engaged, with his brother, Samuel Gregory, in promoting the medical education of women by various publications, and in other ways, and thinking this article might aid the object, has accordingly given it a title page, and presented it in pamphlet form.

## A P P E A L .

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THERE are a great many considerations which render the study of medicine by every individual, and by females particularly, essential to the happiness of society. Some of these we shall name :—

1. Medicine is just as much within the reach of people generally as any other science whatever. There is not a science taught in our common schools that requires less intellectual power. We do not mean by this that medicine is inferior to other sciences, but simply that it is not superior to them — on the same level. Hence it is quite as available as the common acquisitions of knowledge.

2. An almost total ignorance on this subject having long pervaded the public mind, physicians have had too much power over the lives and morals of community. People have been helpless in consequence of their ignorance, and in this helplessness they have suffered greatly by the encroachments of the medical profession.

3. To the physician, medicine is only a means of livelihood ; he has no interest in the profession beyond its pecuniary advantages. But the community have a vastly higher concern in the results of medical practice. To the physician, the practice of his art is a fee ; to the patient, it is life or death. This difference is of itself quite sufficient to show how greatly each person is interested in the science of medicine, and how comparatively trifling are mere professional interests. And yet physicians have not unfrequently discouraged the study of medicine by the populace ; they have wrung many changes on the dangers of quackery, and of tampering with medicine. The true reason of such caution is, the craft is in danger ; if medical knowledge were to become common, the profits of practitioners would cease, and certain pernicious, immoral abuses would be corrected. The fear of exposure has led to the cry of danger ; a wish to perpetuate the helplessness of ignorance, in order to secure an easier prey, has mainly, if not wholly, induced the desire for darkness.

Doubtless many evils accrue from an injudicious use of medical knowledge, and those who are superficial in such knowledge may be peculiarly liable to inflict evils of this kind, but there is not the slightest necessity for such abuses. In every other branch of knowledge, there is the same liability to injury from limited acquirements, and yet we are far from discouraging partial study because the individual has not an opportunity to push his inquiries to perfection. Although in some instances

“A little learning is a dangerous thing,”

yet the evil is easily avoided, and the good is very great.

We have no idea that all physicians would wish to keep the public ignorant for the sake of protecting the profession; but the fact that they so generally disapprove of all attempts to study medicine, except by the profession, shows that they greatly overrate the mischiefs of popular instruction. It is idle to fear the effects of knowledge. Popular intelligence has never been otherwise than a blessing, and in vain do we plead for ignorance as the conservative element of public health.

4. That all have an equal right to this knowledge, as well as an equal capacity for its acquirement, no one can dispute. Mankind are always exposed to disease and death, and the knowledge which tends to avert or to mitigate these evils is their inalienable birthright. It cannot belong to a profession—it can never be monopolized. Physicians may practise medicine, and may excel in medical knowledge; but the proprietorship of such science must always be with the people.

5. The preservation of health, being a duty enjoined by the Creator, cannot be transferred to others.

For this reason alone, if all other motives were wanting, we should be compelled to investigate the laws of our physical nature. We must guard the life intrusted to our care, or incur the guilt of self-destruction.

6. Without medical knowledge, we lose all confidence in physicians. We have not the ability to appreciate their skill or to second their exertions. Those who know most of the science will have most willingness to avail themselves of its advantages. Dr. Rush supposed the preference so generally evinced by ignorant people for quacks and quack nostrums originated in a disease of the mind. In this, however, he was mistaken, for the preference given to the worthless pretender is only the natural effect of ignorance. The good and the bad are confounded, and, solely for want of discrimination, the latter is preferred to the former.



7. If knowledge is power, ignorance must be weakness. The truth of this is seen whenever disease attacks the ignorant. They may have knowledge of other subjects, but, being unacquainted with the physical system, they lie at the mercy of the veriest pretender of medical science. When all is at stake, and nothing but the grave and its dreary associations appear before them, they find themselves reduced to the helplessness of infancy. When the very citadel of life is assailed, they find all at once that they have no means of defence. This fearful exposure can only be met by calling in the aid of physicians; and that it is often met successfully in this way we admit; but is it creditable or safe for rational beings to allow themselves to be reduced to such extremities? Sickness we cannot avoid, yet the imbecility which grows out of this ignorance of therapeutics may easily be avoided. And so great is the hazard, that no argument is necessary to show the propriety of at least ordinary prudential considerations in the shape of medical education. Let those who are invulnerable to disease despise such precaution; but to all others it will prove a priceless acquisition.

8. The ability to coöperate with physicians in their remedial efforts is almost entirely dependent upon some knowledge of the healing art. In every other pursuit where we are obliged to have professional assistance, the advantage of some previous knowledge of what we need is quite apparent; and the critical operations of surgery and medicine are no exception to this rule.

9. A general knowledge of medicine is often of the highest importance in meeting certain exigencies of disease which do not allow of time to procure the services of a physician. In case of a sudden attack or of an accident, the individual who is thus furnished may perhaps save his own life or the life of his friend.

10. Morals are in no inconsiderable degree dependent on the state of health. Many crimes evidently have their origin in a depraved condition of the physical system, and all reformatory processes have more or less relation to the body as well as to the mind. Piety and virtue, therefore, no less than safety, demand the diffusion of medical knowledge.

Such are some of the principal motives to this branch of education, and they are equally applicable to either sex. Although females have a train of ailments peculiar to themselves, yet are they not exempted from such as are common to human nature. They come in for their share of all the nameless catalogue of diseases which, regardless of sex, prey upon flesh and blood. Hence the study of medicine,

and of all the cognate branches of science, has to them not only as much importance as it has to men, but an importance greatly augmented by special liabilities to disease.

The uncertainty of medical practice, even in the best of hands, might be urged as an objection to any attempts on the part of those who do not thoroughly master the profession. But the very terms of the objection contain its own refutation. For if professional skill cannot attain to much exactness, those whose lives are at stake are not to be repelled from medical inquiries on the ground of imperfection. The profession, which have only a fee as an inducement, may more nearly approximate the point of success, but others whose very existence is perilled certainly may be excused both for acquiring and employing such knowledge to the extent of their ability. Females lack not for adaptation to studies of this kind; they have the mental vigor, of which, however, no unusual degree is required, and, beyond all dispute, a preëminent measure of that soothing tenderness, and that suggestive, sympathetic kindness, so beneficial in the sick room. It seems a refinement in cruelty to incapacitate, through ignorance, a nature so devoted to suffering humanity as is that of woman: she is naturally an angel of mercy, and is compelled to indulge her intense benevolence of feeling without the power to employ the customary means of relief. This torture is wholly unexcusable, for no more time is requisite to a tolerable acquaintance with medicine than is demanded for the acquisition of any other science. Physicians study, but not more than lawyers or ministers. In all sciences, the rudiments — by far the most important part — are few and easily acquired. Those recondite and technical applications, which astonish the uninitiated, are in reality superficial, when compared with the elementary principles on which they are based.

Instead of committing the care of our health exclusively to physicians, it is to be hoped the day is not remote in which every individual will have the key of life in his own hand. Men are as able to take care of their health as they are of their property; and when lost, if restoration be possible, they should feel that the possibility is lodged with themselves, and not with a profession. The law of self-preservation demands that the public should enter far more extensively into the work of supervising their physical condition. We are not to shrink back appalled at mysteries, or magnitudes, or responsibilities connected with such efforts. No honest man will ever hint, much less openly affirm, that it is better to remain in ignorance of curative processes, and transfer our interests to the keeping of others.



We cannot discharge this duty by proxy. People must either learn how to preserve their lives, or else incur the guilt of suicide. It is in vain to admonish them of impertinence, presumption, imbecility, or any other consideration which the desire for professional monopoly might suggest. They who have lives to lose are the ones to take care of life; no hireling influences can be substituted for the intelligent and interested conservatism of self-regulation. The love of life, the fear of death, the knowledge of his own symptoms and circumstances, as well as the not unfrequent pressure of momentous consequences incident to the loss of health, are motives capable of prompting the invalid to much greater exertions than can possibly be put forth by those who only resort to medicine for a livelihood.

These observations are not designed to disparage the medical profession. It is a noble profession, but it cannot supersede the necessity for individual oversight of health. The physician is only a helper—, not a proprietor. He is convenient, rather than indispensable. Each person should be able to manage his own health, and promote his own happiness, in matters of vital importance, without this miserable dependence upon professional assistance. Man should not, by his ignorance, render himself a mere tenant at will of the medical faculty. He has too much interest at stake in the question of health thus to pass it by. Were it some article of property or of convenience merely, the supervision might be left to others; but an individual's health, which is his life, belongs to himself as it can belong to no other, and has an importance to him which makes him its fittest guardian.

We need not say that the obligation to take care of our health involves curative as well as merely preservative measures. Perhaps few will deny that part of the duty which relates simply to avoiding occasions of injury, but the correlative part of the obligation—that of restoring health when once impaired—is by most persons entirely neglected, from a conviction that it belongs exclusively to physicians. All classes have participated in this unlawful transfer of responsibility; but woman, from her subordinate position, and from a disposition naturally more confiding, has been the greatest sufferer. To regain the vantage ground which has thus been lost to the sex and to humanity, to restore both male and female to their true position, or, what is the same, to introduce a system of physical education, is an achievement worthy of the age, and indispensable to human happiness.

**PRESERVATION OF MORALS.**—By far the most important consideration connected with the medical education of females is the protec-

tion which it affords to their moral character. The distinction of sex, so immutable in the constitution of society, is entirely overlooked by the modern practice of medicine. The regular practice is exclusively in the hands of men, and no attention whatever is paid to the fact that female delicacy and virtue must suffer by such an unnatural arrangement. Physicians are a privileged class—a class whose privileges are the ruin of society. There is something indescribably horrible in this abuse. Under the name of humanity, and shielded by professional usage, the sacred barriers of morality have been broken down. A profession that might have been useful, had it confined its labors within proper limits, has, by overstepping those limits, and thereby profaning the sanctity of female character and of conjugal vows, rendered itself one of the severest scourges that ever afflicted mankind.

If these remarks require any justification, let it be remembered that the practice of obstetrics, which involves every thing in female delicacy, is left wholly to physicians. Never was there such a mistake as this since man began his career of infatuation and folly. Here is a “violation of the instincts of nature,” a ruthless and effectual subversion of modesty, without even the shadow of an excuse. What would be thought of a man who in any other sphere should assume the fearful and diabolical office of depredation? Under other circumstances, the same conduct would cost a man his life; and is it worse to invade matrimonial rights in health than in sickness? Does the mere incident of illness furnish any sufficient reason for a disregard of modesty and virtue? The distinction of sex is laid in human nature, fixed by the creating hand, and on it are founded many of the most interesting relations and duties of life; it must therefore be preserved inviolate, or the social fabric will be overthrown. God has decreed that every man shall have his own wife free from mercenary or other pollution, and no tampering of the medical faculty can for a moment be permitted without destruction to the marriage compact. Nor is the unmarried woman less dependent on her immaculate sanctity for a passport to connubial life. Let it be known that she is accessible to the physician, and who that pays the least regard to virtue would notice her? Nature groans under the infamous innovation. The female shrinks from the polluting touch of hireling corrupters, and scarcely knows which most to dread, the primal curse or the modern practice. She shrinks, but at last submits, overpowered by ignorance—made the victim of the faculty through a base denial of necessary knowledge. She is compelled in the hour of need to dispense with all medical assistance, or to sacrifice her modesty in receiving aid from men.

Society has unequivocally condemned all virtual disregard of sexual distinctions. Its laws require an absolute non-interference with personal sanctity. But medicine has overleaped these barriers, and has found means to achieve all that the most villanous and debauched could desire; and what is the price?—verily, secrecy. Physicians are permitted to lay unholy hands upon forbidden objects with one simple restriction, namely, secrecy; and that, it is well known, they do not always respect, as indeed they are under no obligation to do. Why might not any or all other men be elevated to the same familiarity with women? Will not they readily agree to the easy terms of secrecy? And will not other men be as likely to neglect further abuse and defilement as is the physician? Do the laws of morality know any difference between a physician and any other man? Does the fact that a man practises medicine give him any right to invade his neighbor's wife, or make his polluting intercourse with her either more decent, or moral, or safe? When the faculty have answered these questions to the satisfaction of intelligent and candid men, we will acknowledge them as public benefactors, and confess to the injustice of these remarks. But answer they cannot; and in default thereof, the present practice of medicine, especially obstetrics, must be set down not only as having an immoral tendency, but as in itself a gross, abusive, and shameless immorality.

The capacity and fitness of women to practise in diseases peculiar to their sex can never be doubted by those who reflect on the facts in the case. Female education, hitherto, has been little more than an insult offered to the human understanding. Every branch of knowledge that is of any real utility to the sex has been industriously withheld from them, and they have been ushered into the world in mental and physical bondage, and doomed to the oppressive, unnatural, and inhuman supervision of physicians in particular, and of intellectual men in general. It can no longer be questioned whether women have powers of mind equal to any intellectual efforts. Had former times left the fact doubtful, which they have not, the present age has established it forever. The names of More, Hemans, Sigourney, Baillie, Sedgwick, Edgeworth, Somerville, Ellis, Sherwood, Gould, Child, Willard, Charlotte Elizabeth, are more than sufficient to attest the capacity of woman. I shall therefore conclude that as to mental qualifications there can be no question, and it only remains to inquire into their physical ability for the requisite medical and surgical operations. Obstetrics is the only branch in which a want of physical vigor can assume even the appearance of an objection. And what

part of this performance requires any considerable strength is more than the faculty have been able to tell. The expulsion of the fœtus is, on all hands, allowed to be the work of nature, and hence it is no gigantic effort of the physician. It may be said that females have not nerves sufficiently strong to perform such assistance in the presence of so much pain. And this, I suppose, is the reason why we are cursed with men on these occasions. But this is a most base and groundless assumption. What! women lack firmness of nerve for these occasions! and are they not always present? nay, more; does not a woman bear all the pain and incur all the danger? If this be the case, cannot a well woman look on? cannot she bear to afford any assistance? Indeed, this contradicts the entire history of the case as it now stands, for women are always present and perform the most difficult parts of the required assistance, as things are now managed. The employment of men is the innovation; the burden of proof, therefore, lies on the opposite side. Till very modern times women alone pretended to officiate, and although men have to a great extent usurped their office, they have not been more successful. For more than fifty centuries females have conducted such affairs with undisputed ability. Any invasion of their prerogatives in an enlightened age, and among virtuous females, would not have been tolerated. But darkness invites to crime, and prevents the apprehension of the criminal. The faculty found women ignorant of medical science, and took the fearful responsibility of annihilating the sanctity of their persons. Man-midwifery began in France under the reign of Louis XIV., and began, as all such enormities must, with one of the vilest of characters — a public prostitute.

Such is the origin of a practice now followed by chaste American women. But will woman longer submit to such an outrage? Will she consent to this hireling prostitution under the name of medicine? Will she seal her infamy by acquiescence in a wrong of this horrid character? If so, we shall find relief in her degeneracy. She is no longer deserving of affection. As the beasts that perish let her be disregarded. To make sure of their prey, physicians have conspired to keep up the dominion of ignorance. Women have been shut out from medical institutions, and all intimations of their rights have been withheld.

There are physicians of noble mind, to whom the injustice and indecency of man-midwifery are apparent; and such men abominate the practice as much as other people can do. There are a few magnanimous individuals who yet retain some sense of right and wrong,



and by whom the moral is still preferred to the immoral. We could with pleasure refer to many living names among the medical faculty, whose views we know to be in accordance with the sentiments here expressed. But we will not trouble the reader with authorities on a question like this; the supposition that he might need them would be a virtual impeachment of his understanding. The following remarks of an eminent physician are, however, such a judicious summary of the whole argument, that we shall not withhold them:—

“The serious object of my present solicitude,” says Dr. Ewell,\* “is to wrest the practice of midwifery from the hands of men and transfer it to women, as it was in the beginning, and ever should be. I have seldom felt a more ardent desire to succeed in any undertaking, because I view the practice of calling on men in ordinary births as a source of serious evils to childbearing; as an imposition upon the credulity of women, and upon the fears of their husbands; as a means of sacrificing delicacy, and consequently virtue; and as a robbery of many good women of their proper employment and support. Truly, it shows as extraordinary a revolution in practice as any afforded by a survey of all the arts. That all females bring forth their young without assistance, except the human in a state of civilization, and that women should call for the assistance of men, while the human species is the only one tormented by jealousy, is a fact that will scarcely be credited in a Turkish harem, or by the Christians of some future and purer age. Should the strangers to the practice inquire if our men have large, unwieldy hands, much curiosity about women; should they ask if our females had the requisites for useful services, — small hands, nice sense of touch, and patience in attendance, — they will absolutely deny this monstrous perversion of nature.

“From the peaceful and retired occupations of women, they are generally more numerous in the community than men. Nevertheless, the men have assumed several offices belonging to the weaker sex. The consequence is, that many women, as men in similar circumstances, wanting proper occupation, seek the employments of the vicious. Inasmuch, therefore, as these men-midwives have meddled with this proper business of women, they have been instrumental in the depravity of many. Indeed, it is owing to their acting where they are not required that female practitioners are often so ignorant — not having the opportunity or means to qualify themselves for attendance on ladies.

\* Letters to Ladies. By Thomas Ewell, M. D., honorary member of the Philadelphia Medical Society, &c., &c.

“Several observing moralists have remarked that the practice of employing men-midwives has increased the corruption among married women. Even among the French, so prone to set aside the ceremonies between the sexes, the immorality of such exposures has been noticed. In an anecdote of Voltaire, it is related that, when a gentleman boasted to him of the birth of a son, he asked who assisted at the delivery. To the answer, ‘A man-midwife,’ he replied, ‘Then you are travelling the road to cuckoldom.’ The acutely-observing historian of nature, Count Buffon, (on puberty,) observes, ‘Virginity is a moral quality, a virtue which cannot exist but with purity of heart. In the submission of women to the unnecessary examinations of physicians, exposing the secrets of nature, it is forgotten that every indecency of this kind is a violent attack against chastity; that every situation which causes an internal blush is a real prostitution.’

“It is very certain, where these exposures have been most numerous, as in large cities, there adultery has been most frequent,

“Be it folly or prejudice, or not, there is a value in the belief that the husband’s hands alone are to have access to his sacred wife. Break through the prejudice, if you please to call it so, but for once, unless powerful reasons command it, the Rubicon is passed; and, rely upon it, the barriers, on future emergencies, will not be so insuperable. Time and opportunity to press on a grateful heart, for a favor in regions where magnified favors have been conferred, have been used and more frequently desired. To convince you of this, you will not require me to enter into the secret history of adultery.

“Many of those modest-looking doctors, inflamed with the thoughts of the well-shaped bodies of the women they have delivered, handled, hung over for hours, secretly glorying in the privilege, have to their patients, as priests to their penitents, pressed for accommodation, and driven to adultery and madness where they were thought most innocently occupied. In one case, I was well assured that a physician in Charleston, infuriated with the sight of the woman that he had delivered, leaped into her bed before she was restored to a state of nature. The melancholy tale of the seduction of the wife of a member of congress from Carolina, by her accoucheur, is a warning that ought not to be disregarded. The beautiful organization of the lady preyed upon his mind for years; he sought her from one to the other extremity of the country, regardless of all dangers; and, on acquiring his game, received a premature and violent death — leaving horror and ruin in the family he had been hired to serve.

“Whatever you may think on this subject, there are many hus-



bands to whom the idea of their wives' exposure is horribly distressing. I have heard of cases affording singular mixtures of the distressing with the ludicrous. In one case in my neighborhood, the husband sent for his physician to his wife in labor, yet was so strongly excited at the idea of her exposure, that he very solemnly declared to the doctor, that if he touched his wife, or looked at her, he would demolish him! No man possessed of a correct and delicate regard for his wife would subject her to any exposure to a doctor that could be avoided without danger.

"But the opposition, the detestation of this practice, cannot be so great in any husband as among some women. The idea of it has driven some to convulsions and derangement; and every one of the least delicacy feels deeply humiliated at the exposure. Many of them, while in labor, have been so shocked by the entrance of a man into their apartment, as to have all their pains banished. Others, to the very last of their senses suffering the severest torments, have rejected the assistance of men. To be instrumental in relieving one of this truly interesting cast, will be a heavenly consolation to all who can be alive to the pleasures of serving the virtuous."

Here we have the testimony of a distinguished physician. By no one can the practice be more severely censured than it is by some members of the profession. And as human nature and common sense are every where the same, it is presumable that all the upright portion of the faculty cherish a similar aversion to what they, as well as other men, must perceive to be a manifest invasion of natural right and moral purity.

How such a debasing and utterly shameless custom ever obtained in society, or why, now that it is established, the universal indignation of virtuous people does not banish it at once, is somewhat difficult to determine. An author, who has written an able work on the subject, ascribes it to ignorance, and to the kind offices of certain medical procuresses — a description of elderly women who seem to delight in prostrating the bulwarks of virtue. "They admire," says he, "to make themselves useful as accoucheurs' assistants, principally for the satisfaction of being present at these exhibitions. They take particular pains to exclude the husband, that their sociability and freedom may not be abridged. One of them said 'she always felt *ashamed* to see a young husband hanging round!'"

Thus the husband is, as it were, driven from his wife on these occasions, and she is put into the hands of another man! Such a practice is enough to make the cheek of vice itself crimson with shame. It

were far better to have no wife than to have one under circumstances of this kind — better to be childless and homeless than to become the victim of mercenary pollution.

Before I dismiss this part of the subject, it is necessary to consider more fully the enormity of subjecting young women to the present medical usage. The unlimited power of physicians over them, and the consequent danger to their reputation and virtue, are sufficiently evident to all who are in the least acquainted with medical practice. Now, it is a first principle in civilized society that young women are to be treated with respect; their persons are ever considered perfectly inviolable. But they are human beings, and, as such, subject to many diseases peculiar to their sex, and also to other ailments, the treatment of which requires a greater familiarity with their persons than can safely or justifiably be committed to any man. I am aware that the mother or some older woman that may happen to be present often serves as a channel of communication, and the doctor makes his shameless disclosures to those who are already hardened through repeated violations of nature and modesty. Yet this alters not the case, for all young women have not a mother nor an older female friend to shield them from the direct approach of the faculty. There is, however, a more revolting aspect of this affair. Many of the faculty are not married men, and the young female has to come under the treatment and into the power of one to whom most of all she dreads to reveal the peculiarities of her situation and nature. She knows with what pleasure he will approach and avail himself of observations to which he is in no degree entitled, and to which she cannot submit without a conscious self-degradation. Is there any mercy or humanity in thus contemning all the virtuous and delicate sensibilities of womanhood? And if we add now, what must often be added, that the physician is of licentious character, and will not fail to seize upon any advantages of this kind which his profession may throw in his way, what hopes can we cherish that the virtue of the female will survive? Betrayed, through parental neglect and the debasing customs of society, to a premature and unnatural intercourse with men, is any thing but the ruin of morals to be expected? Nay, rather, is not the moral character ruined by this very act? Is there not made a fatal inroad upon that modesty which should never be invaded? The instances here mentioned comprehend but few of the horrors of this shameful practice. Through all the varied relations of social life the dangers and the corruptions of this pernicious usage diffuse their influence, and weaken, to an alarming degree, the founda-

tions of society. While the faculty maintain integrity enough to support external decency, the extent of their encroachments is not perceived, and all is supposed to be safe and right. Did they improve every opportunity their practice affords for the actual and gross pollution of women, public hostility would intercept their progress. Prudence forbids this, even if they desired freedom from all restraint. But in this crisis, what becomes of precision in morals? Is a citadel guarded no better than this judged to be worthy of defence? We leave the measure of prostitution to be determined by the faculty, subject only to their own judgment of what is consistent with public forbearance. Surely we need not, under such circumstances, inquire what is likely to become the standard of morals. Delicacy and moral sensitiveness are out of the question. If the least approximation to immorality is the commencement of ruin, — if a single iota of ground ceded here is necessarily fatal, — we need not inquire into the sequel of premeditated exposure.

SECURITY OF THE FAMILY COMPACT. — From the preceding section, as well as from every other view of human interests, it is evident that there should be in every community enough well-educated women to practise obstetrics, and thus give security to the family compact, by allaying all uneasiness, and removing temptations to immorality.

No one in the least acquainted with human nature will need to be told that an occurrence which, in all but its legal bearings, is more than sufficient to produce a divorce, cannot fail to shake the foundation of connubial happiness. The wife is sacred to her husband. She can belong to no other, except her God. Be it that this tie is broken, this sanctity removed, and whatever may be the cause, the effect will be very nearly the same. The husband's feelings must endure the shock; he will know that his rights have been invaded, and that the wife of his bosom is no longer sacred to himself. Whether the evil springs from lustful appetite on her part, or on the part of those by whom she is surrounded, or is occasioned by some depraved social custom, is of no great consequence, since the fact is the same, whatever may have been its cause. There is a difference of motive which may go, and does go far, to reduce the guilt in one case below what it is in the other; but the physical fact remains unchanged. A man's property may perish by the torch of the incendiary or by the ordinary casualties of Providence; yet the loss is not varied by the manner of its occurrence. If females are left in such a state of ignorance as not to be able to provide for their own health without an improper exposure of their persons to the other sex, those to whom

they are united in marriage must feel the weight of this exposure, and estimate their matrimonial connections at what they may be worth under the circumstances. Such an item of insecurity and injustice would, to many a sensitive nature, more than balance the advantages of a marriage contract. If the man must plight his faith and receive his bride only to have her despoiled under the protection of law, he would choose to refrain from the alliance. What aggravates the evil is, that marriage generally takes place before the parties know any thing of the debasing circumstances to which they are afterwards to be subjected. Did they know at the outset that sanctity was to be but a name, and that the medical profession was to set at nought all the decencies of life and plunge into the excess of abuse, then there would at least be no advantage taken of their honest intentions. But at present the imposition comes up unexpectedly, and diffuses a blight on sanctities that had been cherished as the foundation of domestic life. Before there is opportunity to resist or time to reflect, all is swept away in the tide of fashionable depravity. The wife is sick — the physician is called — thenceforth a family physician — scarcely less intimate in any respect, and in some more intimate, with her than the husband himself. She is to be with the physician when her husband cannot be, and is made his confidant in matters never broken to the ears of the man whose name she bears. I am sure every reflecting woman will see the effect which this state of things must have upon a man. He may not impute to his wife any overt intention, but he will deeply realize how far she is from being his own. The hold which she had upon his affections will grow less every hour, and though he may live with her, because the law does not, under the circumstances, recognize his right to a divorce, yet it will be with a saddened, impoverished heart, doomed to bear a weight of inconceivable anguish. The husband must know that he is an injured man, and that it is not in human power to redress the wrong which he suffers. Lost sanctity cannot be restored. Though crime may not be imputed, though his wife has only suffered the common measure of degradation, yet he deplures, and must forever deplore, the ruthless invasion of his rights by the medical faculty. Many a wife might date at this early period of her married life the commencement of future troubles. Vigorous affections were nipped in the bud; ere the birth of the first child, perhaps, the fatal blow was given to domestic peace. Relief is found in paying less attention to those whom we discover to be less ours. A highly-excited and injured state of feeling, from which there is no possibility of deliverance by



ordinary methods, breaks down the most sacred barriers of the heart; and the man who loved his wife next to his God, and preferred her to all others of her sex, must soothe himself by reflecting how little important she is to his happiness. Women should tremble at the price they pay for the attentions of medical gentlemen on such occasions. This world is not so constituted that the sacred principles of purity and justice can be trifled with; and if women will employ men on occasions of confinement, they must lay their account with the probable sacrifice of affection. It would be asking too much of the human heart not to allow it to reject indignantly assaults upon its rights; nor can we always very accurately distinguish between a merely passive and a voluntary acquiescence in what is wrong. Still the husband is inclined to make apologies, and regard his wife as the victim of social rather than of personal corruption. But it is impossible to keep down suspicion, and prevent an impression that these unjust and demoralizing exposures are not the choice of women. Some women are so tenacious of adhering to the practice of man-midwifery, that we must necessarily conclude they would have no objections to it if their husbands had none; and as the case now is, they are ready to hazard respect at home, rather than relinquish a practice recommended to them by general usage.

The effects of this exposure on the heart and mind of woman are not the less real or the less pernicious for being incidental. She is brought into contact with the other sex in a manner affecting character, and it is not optional with her whether the exposure of her person shall or shall not be attended with evil effects upon her own mind. To be sure, she does not seek the occasion, — for if she did, a divorce would be inevitable, — but she is overtaken by the assailant of her virtue, and may not innocently remain in such a situation. Her person being sacred to another, should make it exceedingly displeasing to her to be, or appear to be, unfaithful to her marriage covenant. As a wife she is already appropriated, and there is none upon earth to whom she may commit herself. The propriety and extent of this consecration are likely to be felt by the husband; they are to him the pledge of domestic bliss, and the bond which binds him to a similar restriction. Any negligence on her part, if it does not provoke a corresponding depravity in him, will most surely weaken his attachment to her. He may not become vicious, but he will cease to love. Esteem is for the virtuous, and confidence for the incorruptible; but a woman passive enough to yield obsequiously to a debasing practice is neither virtuous nor incorruptible, and therefore cannot retain her

place in the affections of an upright man. Females may think the universality of the custom in question will give it sufficient authority, and render it innoxious upon their social relations; but let them beware of deception — the instincts of nature are not to lie dormant at the bidding of popular abuses. Every man who has a wife must resent all improper treatment of her, however such treatment may be viewed by the public. The heart and the conscience are not regulated by a profession, nor can they ever become so worthless as to acknowledge no higher control than the artificial distinctions of society. Our faculties cannot be bribed. Man must ever hate the wrong, while he loves the right. It is in vain, therefore, to rely upon the conformity of our powers to a radical corruption of this kind. Nature will revolt. Woman must be free, not only from all suspicion of too ready an acquiescence in a corrupt practice, but from all actual taint, whether intentional or unintentional, or she cannot possess the affection and respect essential to the conjugal state.

When we consider how peculiar, and in several respects how slight, is the tie which binds the husband and wife together, we see at once the necessity of maintaining it unimpaired. The attractive influence by which such associations are formed is only sufficient for the object designed: "God, who setteth the solitary in families," has not created a surplus of these hallowed drawings; and if we trifle with attachments so vital to the social system, we shall find the course of life seriously interrupted. The family may not in every instance be broken up; but there will be a partial alienation — a diminished regard, which is wholly unnecessary, and which domestic interests cannot well sustain. The wife and mother need never depreciate; the freshness of youthful love and the entire devotion of early-married life may remain, and will remain, if the sanctities of the relation are not ruthlessly invaded. No husband's affections, if he be a virtuous man, will become less towards the partner of his life till it is evident to his mind that she is wanting in purity of character. In the estimation of the husband, the wife's character is her all. Her sex alone made her an object of choice, or, rather, alone made it possible for her to be a wife; and she can only enter into or sustain that important relation by immaculateness of sexual virtue. As woman, she has power that will not decline. This is the talismanic influence which binds her to the other sex, and which she must preserve at all hazards.

I have extended these remarks quite far enough, perhaps; but it may be well to remind the reader that obstetric practice is only one of many disgusting immoralities introduced by physicians. They



have access to women on other occasions, and take liberties with them in other things quite as fatal to modesty and virtue. On this point we must refer to medical works; and in view of the facts there to be found in abundance, we think no intelligent person will hesitate to say that female physicians are necessary among their own sex.

THE REMEDY—PROGRESS OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AMONG FEMALES.—For the evils which we have set forth there is but one remedy, namely, the thorough physical education of women. We must have not only such a knowledge of hygiene as will secure a proper development and careful preservation of the physical system among women generally, but a due proportion of them should be thoroughly-educated physicians—capable of treating all diseases, and especially all peculiar to their sex, in the most scientific and successful manner. Then it will not be necessary to confound distinctions and outrage morality on any occasion—whatever can be done or need to be done being as fully within the reach of a female medical attendant as it could be of a male practitioner. It is a very grave insult to the mind of woman to say, or even to imply by our arrangements, that she has not sense enough to manage her own affairs. She is capable of suffering with a constancy most admirable, and she ventures heroically to soothe the most wretched through every scene of pain to the very gates of death. Whoever may quail where sickness and death abound, woman does not. She is last at the cross, and first at the sepulchre. Tact, judgment, tenderness, quickness of apprehension, each and every quality desirable in the physician, may be found in her as fully as in the other sex. The restoration to females of their share in the medical treatment of human maladies is demanded, no less as a matter of respect for their intellectual powers than as a means for securing their morals from depravation. For this reform the public are now ready, with the exception of a few unprincipled physicians, and perhaps as many ignorant women, who are equally unprincipled. Every man not in the medical profession, and every physician of honorable feelings, as well as every woman of virtuous character, must desire the change. Women are beginning nobly to assert their rights, and a few years, if we are not greatly mistaken, will serve to effect a complete revolution in this part of medical practice. The Boston Medical and Surgical Journal lately contained a severe article on the “Empirical School of Midwifery;” charging, as usual, women with incompetency, and others with improper motives. To this ungentlemanly tirade a female wrote a reply, which the editor probably dare not refuse. We give the following extract, which shows that some ladies understand

\* It is proper to add, that since that time, 1849, the Journal has frequently spoken favorably of Female Medical Colleges.—Publ.

themselves quite too well to be longer the victims of such base deception :—

“Your correspondent complains that the clergy are favorable to this movement, and calls in question the motives which actuate a ‘body of so much intelligence and benevolence.’ I answer, that it is this very intelligence and benevolence that causes them to feel so deep an interest in the matter, and which prompts them to advocate the good of the community at large, rather than the pecuniary interest of a would-be favored few, who would keep females in ignorance of their own organization, that they might reap the benefit of their consequent suffering. And in the present state of ‘medical literature,’ when every book is filled with technicalities which none but the learned and scientific are expected to understand, to whom are we to look for a precedence in these things but to those in whom we place the most confidence and trust? Your correspondent thinks that cases of difficult parturition have tended to throw the practice naturally and legitimately into the hands of male practitioners. I would ask if medical statistics have ever shown a greater number of deaths of parturient females, even when the practice was entirely in the hands of females, and when it was considered disgraceful for a male to be present. But is it not rather to be attributed to the diffidence and disquietude which a delicate female must feel in such presence, (at a time when, of all others, she needs to be soothed and made perfectly at ease,) that difficult cases are of such frequent occurrence?

“Your correspondent says that those who practise the profession need the experience derived from ordinary cases to qualify *them* to meet the more difficult. But I do not believe a case of difficult parturition ever occurred in which it would not have been more consonant with the feelings of the sufferer to have had a female practitioner, *provided* she could have possessed the *requisite knowledge*; and it is that knowledge that we aim at, and claim that we have a right to possess. It is our lack of means for obtaining such knowledge of which we complain. He also states that he has had cases which no *ordinary* female could have managed with safety. Most likely; *ordinary* females should not be engaged in the business. Ordinary *men* are not, or should not be. But let females who have a capacity for the business receive some of the advantages which have been so amply provided for the ‘lords of creation;’ let them be admitted to your college, receive the benefit of your medical lectures, and have access to your extensive libraries; and when they have studied ‘long enough,’ let them be critically examined by your professors, and let such only as

are competent receive authority to practise, and *ordinary* women would no longer find employment.

“Your correspondent also asks, ‘Will the well-educated and most sensible women engage?’ I would answer, There may not be many whose tastes would lead them into the study. But it has always been considered an honorable employment for a *man*; and I trust the time is not far distant when it will no longer be thought a *disgrace* for *woman* to be capable of administering to the necessities of her own sex. And when physiological knowledge shall be more generally diffused among females, — when they understand more fully the wonderful organization of their own being, — they will no longer remain thoughtless or passive upon so important a subject, permitting your sex to monopolize a branch which a proper sense of decorum *should* proclaim belonged *exclusively* to us.”

Thus efficiently will females plead their own cause, when once they come to realize the facts in the case. Already has this reviving moral sentiment begun to embody itself in appropriate action: it is not merely as a private opinion or a smothered resentment of soul that objections now exist. A righteous repugnance has originated two female medical colleges within the present year — one in Philadelphia, and the other in Boston. Both of these institutions are regularly chartered by the states in which they are located, and the latter has been in successful operation for the two years past. Besides these, the Central Medical College at Rochester — one of the best institutions in the country — freely admits ladies to its entire course of instruction, and has, in fact, a female professorship. This college has graduated eight females during the present year. The Medical College at Memphis, Tennessee, has also graduated two ladies, and the college at Geneva, N. Y., one — Miss Blackwell. These are favorable indications, and furnish most encouraging evidence that nothing but a deliberate choice of depravity can keep the old practice alive. Public instruction will go on, and many females become qualified for the practice of medicine in all its extent. These will all be wanted. But we need not wait till a thoroughly-educated generation can arise; a very little instruction will enable any ordinary woman to be so far useful to her sex on occasions of sickness as to cut off all necessity for employing men. Private reading and practical experience — the great sources of medical knowledge — are open to all females, and by means of these they might soon qualify themselves for the most extended practice. But in any event it would hardly be

possible for them not to become competent to those pressing demands which are of daily occurrence.

Physicians, when they find how this branch of their practice is viewed, may perhaps attempt some reform: discarding the grosser features of the thing, they may hope to retain it without offence. But the evil is too great ever to be reformed: it is an unmixed wrong, and cannot be made right. Nothing short of extirpation will answer. The public mind will continue to be shocked, and all our better feelings outraged, while any vestige of the practice remains. The demand for female practitioners must be coexistent with virtuous feeling. While woman is prized, her desecration must be felt as a calamity to the social affections.

It is difficult to speak of a great public abuse in terms sufficiently measured. Severity requires to be tempered by prudence. In the statements which we have made in this and the preceding sections, the intelligent reader will readily perceive there is no exaggeration; facts have been given without the slightest attempts at coloring. Truths which cannot be gainsaid, and whose specific enormity is sufficient to harrow up the feelings of the deepest indignation in every heart, may safely be left to produce their effect, unembellished by rhetoric and unmagnified by prejudice. Let physicians complain, if they dare, of injustice; let them defend themselves, if they can. We know that some — many of them — are pure-minded men; but this does not by any means exculpate the profession at large. A good man will always regret occasions of temptation; he pities the degraded condition of humanity, and would fain keep himself from injuring others either wittingly or unwittingly. To him, custom and law are valuable only as they are right; and however he may yield to pernicious customs, he does it with reluctance, and without the slightest tincture of that fiendish pleasure which a corrupt man takes in following the depraved courses of the world. We cannot suppose that an honorable physician would so far forget himself as to describe in public what he had seen in private, or boast of the manner in which he had handled the women whom custom had betrayed into his hands. Yet the profession abounds with men who are mean enough to do it, and who glory in this very thing; nay, more, who in all probability entered the medical profession on purpose thus to get access to females. But whether they originally entered the profession for such an object or not, they soon become capable of rioting on the spoils of virtue. Finding themselves admitted to hold intercourse with women, — yes,



to have privileges with them such as no other class of men have, — they have, as a natural consequence, given way to an almost, if not quite, unavoidable licentiousness. Little do husbands or wives know the brutal triumph which these professional debauchers exhibit over their victims, or the ardent longings they have to enlarge their practice in this direction.

“When lecturing in Lynn,” says an author alluded to, “several of the citizens spoke before the audience, approving of my course, and corroborating my statements with additional facts. Among others, a gentleman known in the literary world said he thought the business should be in the hands of women; said a doctor there, on seeing a beautiful lady *enceinte* passing in the street, elbowed a friend, and said, ‘I should like to attend that lady by and by, to see her handsome person.’”

“Mrs. Ruth Stebbings, before spoken of, said the young doctors of Suffield, Ct., when speaking of attending the young wives on their first occasion, called it ‘halter-breaking them.’ And, rejoicing in their occupation, ‘There,’ they would say to each other, as they looked out into the street, ‘there goes one that I halter-broke a few weeks ago; and there, yonder, comes another that I shall break in soon.’ Suppress your indignation, reader, and go earnestly about correcting this libidinous system.”

While such abominations are an inseparable attendant, not only of man-midwifery, but of nearly the whole attention which male physicians bestow upon their female patients, we can have no hope of virtue but in the establishment of medical schools for each of the sexes. So long as human nature is the same in physicians that it is in other men, so long must they be corrupted by this unnatural access to women. And on the other hand, while women are susceptible of unchastity, they cannot fail of becoming unchaste under such treatment.

It only remains, then, to determine whether we will longer submit to an evil which must forever prove uncontrollable. Shall the distinction of sex be regarded, or shall it not, in the department of medicine? If best to abolish it here, it is best to abolish it elsewhere. If our wives and daughters are to be delivered up to doctors, we may as well give all other men the same access to them. A diploma makes no difference, either with the law of God or with the carnal propensities of the heart. Debauchery and indecency are just as lawful and just as expedient without as with a license to practise

medicine. The wrong done to connubial rights and sanctities is not mitigated in the least because the man who does it holds a parchment.

These views are not new. I have steadily maintained them for the last fifteen years, and the greater part of the last three sections was actually written fourteen years ago. Since that time I have had ample opportunities for experience and observation, but the opinions then forced upon me have only been confirmed by subsequent events. And it is gratifying to know that the country is awaking from its long slumber to a just sense of its danger and degradation.

NOTE BY THE PUBLISHER. — Persons desiring to aid in providing the public with Female Physicians will best promote the object by rendering pecuniary assistance to the Female Medical Colleges now in operation, or by starting new ones in other sections of the country. The great and populous State of New York ought certainly to have one located in this city, unequalled for its facilities for hospital and other practice for pupils while obtaining their medical education. From a statement in Godey's Lady's Book, it appears that, in Cincinnati, "efforts are being made to establish, on a very liberal scale, a Female Medical College; an eminent citizen having pledged \$2000 towards endowing such an institution."

The New England Female Medical College, located in Boston, was opened in 1848, and has been in successful operation since. But it is very much in need of funds to provide a permanent building, a library, additional apparatus, &c. As there are powerful interests and influences operating to retard this enterprise, its friends should at once, and without solicitation, proffer their aid. Much has already been accomplished; above seventy pupils have been connected with the college, and they are making themselves extensively useful among their own sex and children, especially in that very feminine branch of practice, midwifery, in which they have attended some thousands of cases. One of them in Boston, since her connection with the college, has successfully presided at above three hundred births, over a hundred a year for the past two years, and her practice is constantly increasing. A thousand such women are this moment needed in the Eastern States alone. Let the people of Boston, and Massachusetts, and New England, see that their Female Medical College is liberally sustained. The institution is conducted by the Female Medical Education Society, incorporated by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1850. Reports of the society and college, and any other information respecting the enterprise, can be obtained by applying, personally or by letter, to the Secretary, Samuel Gregory, 15 Cornhill, Boston.

The Female Medical College of Pennsylvania, located in Philadelphia, is doing good service for the cause. Let the people of that state see that the institution has ample means to accomplish its objects with efficiency and success worthy of the medical reputation of their great metropolis. The corresponding officer of the institution is Dr. David J. Johnson, 229 Arch Street.



## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE FEMALE MEDICAL EDUCATION SOCIETY.\*

*From Ex-Governor Wm. Slade, Vermont.*

Having met with your "Letter to Ladies, in favor of Female Physicians for their own Sex," I cannot refrain from giving you a word of approval and encouragement. I am much impressed with some of the reasons urged by you for the employment of female physicians in complaints peculiarly incident to women. . . . It seems to me that no intelligent and humane physician can hesitate to approve any well-directed effort to bring female talent into this department of his profession. . . . I have nothing to say of "women's rights," as claimed by many; but I am most deeply convinced that the sphere of woman's usefulness may be enlarged — and that it may with very great propriety, and greatly to the alleviation of female suffering, take the direction that the Female Medical Education Society are laboring to give it. I need not add that I wish you great success in this effort to do good.

*From Judge Joel W. White, Norwich, Ct.*

Your "Letter to Ladies," relating to the objects of the Female Medical Education Society, of which you are Secretary, has been read by me with great interest. No institution, in my opinion, has stronger claims upon public benevolence for its support than the Medical College conducted and sustained by your association, whose object is to remove a large amount of female suffering.

The ideas by you advanced have induced me to become a contributor to the amount of \$20, the fee of life membership of your society. Enclosed you will find a check on the Suffolk Bank for the amount, which please apply for the support of your institution.

*From Rev. Luther Wright, Woburn, Mass.*

Enclosed are \$20, the sum requisite to constitute me a life member of the Female Medical Education Society. Among the philanthropic and Christian enterprises of the day, I think the one in which you are engaged is especially entitled to favor and support; it accordingly gives me pleasure to contribute something at present, with the hope of doing more at another time. It appears to me that persons who have wealth to appropriate to benevolent objects could not make a more advantageous investment for the good of society, and of the race, than by endowing the institution that your association is engaged in establishing.

*From Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, Philadelphia.*

I am happy to enclose you the name and subscription of one life member of the Female Medical Education Society. . . I shall greatly rejoice if I can aid this grand and good cause in which you are engaged, heart and soul; and you may rely on my assurance of doing what I can. I have given away all the pamphlets you sent me. The "Letter to Ladies" is much esteemed, and the Report of the Massachusetts Legislature is high authority. Can you favor me with another package of these pamphlets?

*From Mrs. L. H. Sigourney, Hartford, Ct.*

Please accept my earnest thanks for the Reports of your Society, and especially for the admirable pamphlet addressed to our Sex, by your own pen, which you have had the kindness to send me. Of the latter it is impossible to speak too highly.

[The note from which the above was taken enclosed \$20, the fee of life membership to the Female Medical Education Society. The following is from a subsequent letter.]

I rejoice that your philanthropic design advances in public estimation, which I am sure it will continue to do, being founded on the immutable laws of nature, and also a palpable element of true patriotism. . . . Boston, in former days, took the lead of all our cities in liberally sustaining noble plans, and, I trust, still preserves that character.

*From Mrs. Emma Willard, Troy, N. Y.*

Having read your views on the subject of female medical education, I am ready to say that I heartily approve them. . . . Women need instruction, and such an institution as yours to receive and educate them, and I wish to your praiseworthy efforts every encouragement.

*From Mrs. Almira Lincoln Phelps, Patapsco Female Institute, Maryland.*

I am happy to send you the enclosed \$20, the fee of life membership of the Female Medical Education Society.

It has long been my opinion that the science of medicine should be cultivated by women, especially in those departments in which women are peculiarly interested.

. . . . It has required a great amount of moral courage to brave public prejudice on this subject; but the work is begun, and can never retrograde. Your Society is doing much to aid it, and you have my best wishes for success.

\* Samuel Gregory, Boston.

# FEMALE MEDICAL EDUCATION.

OPINIONS OF EDITORS AND OTHERS.

It has always appeared to us that the education of females was not sufficiently extended in the direction which it is now proposed to give it. There are many diseases of women and children, and many cases of practice among them, in which a lady, well qualified by medical and surgical education, may be employed with every advantage; and the sense of propriety, that prevails in every well-regulated mind, would decide that the presence of a female practitioner is even more desirable than that of a man, however learned or skilful.

*New York Observer.*

There are a few self-evident propositions, and it would be questioning the common sense of mankind to doubt the general belief on these points. One is, that women are by nature better qualified than men to take charge of the sick and suffering; a second, that mothers should know the best means of preserving the health of their children; and a third point is, that female physicians are the proper attendants for their own sex in the hour of sorrow.

*Godey's Lady's Book.*

The importance of securing for women a larger sphere of usefulness, and the especial propriety and desirableness of qualifying them to practise the healing art among children and those of their own sex, will be admitted, I should hope, by all persons.

*Rt. Rev. Bishop Potter.*

I would express my conviction that the objects aimed at are of great moment, and call for the aid and coöperation of all intelligent and benevolent members of the community.

*Rev. Edward Beecher, D. D.*

We have long been persuaded that both morality and decency require female practitioners of medicine. Nature suggests it; reason approves it; religion demands it.

*Northern Christian Advocate.*

Fifty years hence it will be difficult to gain credit for the assertion that American women acquiesced, throughout the former half of the nineteenth century, in the complete monopoly of the medical profession by men, even including midwifery and the treatment of the diseases peculiar to the gentler sex. The current usage, in this respect, is monstrous; but its reign is near its end; the abuse begins to be discussed, and discussion will soon finish it.

*New York Tribune.*

In our opinion this enterprise should meet with the favor and support of every married man and woman in the community; for we believe that women can become as competent to the performance of the delicate duties of midwifery as men, and that they alone should perform them.

*New Hampshire Patriot.*

Whoever shall found a college for the instruction of female physicians, will do good service for his generation and race.

*Christian World.*

The object is an important one, and every reasonable man and woman must wish for its success.

*Boston Traveller.*

Progress is the watchword of the times, and when manifested in causes akin to this in substantial and practical good, none but the conventionally dull will regret it.

*Boston Post.*

The object is of great public importance, and must commend itself to general favor and support.

*Christian Witness and Church Advocate, (Boston.)*

This is one of the most important projects of the day for the improvement of the condition of women.

*Zion's Herald and Wesleyan Journal, (Boston.)*

Conservative as we are, we are fond of rational reforms, and in no one do we more rejoice than in this.

*Hartford (Ct.) Courant.*

We approve of female physicians, fully. On certain occasions a due regard for delicacy dictates that men should not be called in, if capable women can be procured. The employment of men as "midwives" is a modern custom, and one not to be commended.

*Philadelphia Saturday Post.*

We have long approved of this change, as no female the least refined can feel pleasant with a male attendant, especially in cases of extreme sickness; and often, no doubt, diseases of a peculiar character have been concealed, and death welcomed rather than exposure to the rude searching gaze of men. Reform is demanded, and we shall have it before long.

*Portsmouth (Va.) Pilot.*

The people feel that educated female doctors are a kind of "God-send," and they will employ them for the softer sex. It cannot be helped; the people will do it.

*American Journal of Medicine.*

Among the wise and benevolent projects which have been started in America, of late years, and of providing the means of giving to females a medical education, for practice among their own sex, has attracted my particular attention, and from the first moment I heard of it I gave it my unqualified approbation.

*Rev. H. G. O. Dwight, Missionary at Constantinople.*

It is unquestionable that in that great country, [alluding to this movement in the U.S.] and among a great people, reforms are in progress which, while they startle us by their magnitude, strike at the root of many social evils, and lay the foundations of improvements of which the universe will reap the benefits hereafter. There can be no doubt that all classes of society would prefer to employ women in peculiar cases, — cases in which women must have the surest and easiest facilities for acquiring knowledge, — if there were conclusive evidence of their fitness for the task upon which always so much depends; and who will be bold enough to affirm, that if women were duly, wisely, and by system educated for the discharge of such duties, they would be incompetent to perform them?

*Sharpe's London Magazine.*